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Background Statement

I can think of many expectations that were laid out for the elementary aged and probably the basic expectations of all students attending Waynflete School. Respect others; the most important rule that I think should apply to all human beings and should be the first thing that is taught to any child. It’s hard to get places in life if you don’t respect others because then they are less likely to respect you in return. I still feel the need to respect other people no matter who they are. For me, it doesn’t matter if you are a kind person or a rude one, everyone deserves to be treated with respect. I would never want someone to treat me badly, so why should I treat anyone else with disrespect? Another expectation I remember would be to have fun in whatever it was that we were doing. I’ve come to realize that having fun doesn’t always incorporate laugher and play, it can also be an intense game or time consuming project that everyone is involved in, but in the end, realizes that they had a good time working together and focusing on reaching a similar goal. With that comes my last expectation of having goals, aspirations and dreams. I have always been asked, since I began school, what my goals were, whether they were short or long term, goals are important to have because they give someone a reason to do anything that they need to do to get to their goals. From Kindergarten to twelfth grade, it is so important to show students why they are doing the things they “need” to do and helping them to see how these needs are getting them closer to their goals.

The expectations of my parents were mostly to show that they care. I think people do this in many ways, but I would say that being involved and knowing what’s going on with their children inside and outside of the classroom can very positively impact a student’s education, but their life in the long run. My mom worked a lot, but when she had the time, she always tried to be involved in field trips when I was young and went to all my parent teacher conferences. To this day, she still asks me how school is, even if most children say, “good” and leave it at that, the fact that, no matter what my answer has been, she always has given me the opportunity to tell her about my day. I’m very thankful for that. My dad has lived in Florida since I was two years old, but he has always made the effort to call and be involved with my life as much as he is able. My report cards were always sent to both my moms and my dad’s house, which allowed him to both hear and see how I was doing in school.

I would say that for me as a student, the business world didn’t truly affect me until I was a senior in high school when I realized when I chose a college I had to choose a major too. I knew lots of things that I loved to do, but could those things be jobs. When I was about a Freshman in high school, my mom got laid off from her well-paying job and became a student like me. Though her job paid well, she did not enjoy the work she was doing. She inspired me to focus on what it was that I like to do and go to school for that. When she went back to school, it wasn’t to make more money, it was to be qualified for the job she truly wanted to be a part of. She now works for a women’s homeless shelter that she is a full-time employee, and loving the work that she does. I decided towards the end of my Senior year that I wanted to work as an Elementary teacher and by my Sophomore year in college I narrowed my sights to Elementary health and physical education. I think many years ago, education had a lot to do with how much money a person wanted to make in their future, for me and many more of the people of my generation, it’s more about happiness and what type of work could be enjoyable to do for the rest of our lives.

I had very knowledgeable and caring teachers throughout my years in school. I always expected a great education, to have fun, and to build quality relationships with my teachers. Different classes were set up differently based on how the teacher liked their room to be, but the teachers who liked more lecturing had single desks and chairs usually and the teachers who liked more discussion and project based classes had either small round tables or they had us set up the single desks and chairs in an inclusive (semi)circle.

As I said above, the way teachers would set up their room would be the first indication of the kind of teacher they were and how they organized their classes. For me, when I’m a teacher, I want my students to be in a circle or in small table groups to facilitate discussions among each other. I don’t think a class should ever be all about what the teacher has to say. The students can teach each other so much more than what I could teach them on my own. Putting them in one inclusive circle makes for an interpersonal, together type of environment, and I want to work together with my students. I think the group style room was helpful for me because I am more of an interpersonal type of leaner and I do things a lot better when I can work with other people, although I can work alone as well, I think it just makes for a more comfortable environment conducive to learning when students are in groups or in one big circle rather than in rows like a lecture hall. Another strategy that many of my teachers used was always being available to meet with students before, during, and after, school hours. They made their schedules very open for class time and for meeting with students who needed some extra help or just a little bit of encouragement to get the work done. This strategy was an important characteristic of my teachers that I enjoyed because I needed a lot of help getting assignments done and it was just easier for me to work one on one with the teacher instead of going home to do my work where there were so many distractions. I work a lot better in an environment that is quiet and easy for me to focus in.

I had so many great teachers at the school I went to and I would like to credit all that they did to shape me into the person I am today, but I must say, my favorite teacher was definitely my fourth and fifth grade social studies teacher. She always came to class with a smile on her face and she just seemed like she loved to teach. Even though social studies wasn’t my favorite subject, that year it was my favorite class because she was my favorite teacher. I spent a lot of time with her in and out of class just talking about any and everything. She was also my homeroom teacher so I saw her quite a bit throughout fourth and fifth grade. She just always cared so much about her students. She was the teacher who taught me “don’t yuck someone else’s yum” and the one who showed everyone the Oregon Trail, which is the best game I’ve ever played! I hope that when I’m a teacher, students look back a remember the impact that I had on them like Kate had on me.

My school was not very diverse when I was younger, but I do remember that as I got into middle and high school, more students of different ethnicities began to pour in. There were 2 black students in my grade that I can remember in elementary school and I remember 2 of my friends were Asian, but that was the most of the diversity of students who were close in age to my own. I know we definitely did a lot in every class to feature different cultures. Each year there would be a global focus week where the whole elementary school would focus on one area of the world and celebrate everything about it. The food, the scenery, the jobs, etc. Those weeks were so much fun. I remember when we did Japan because all the students got to try sushi!

I was around seventh grade that we started being able to choose some of our classes. I took Latin from sixth grade until senior year, which I think is a super unique trait of Waynflete because it is mandatory that all sixth graders take Latin to be introduced to the language. I took higher level math classes until about Sophomore year of high school when I started taking Calculus, but also higher level sciences as well. I loved school until around my Sophomore and Junior year. It started to get hard for me around then. I do think that I got the best education that I could have received in Southern Maine having gone to Waynflete.

I think having had such great role models as teachers all throughout my education gives me a great starting point when starting my teaching career. The only thing I think is different is that I didn’t have many health classes. I can only remember taking one health class as a Freshman in high school. I do think that my teachers have so much passion and compassion in their teaching styles, which is why I’d want to be like them when I have my own classroom. I want to be a teacher because I think there are never enough people to teach children how to be good human beings. Our job is not only to teach them to read, to write, and to speak, but its also just to show them why it is important to be a good person and how to be an important part of society. Most importantly, I just love kids and I want to spend every day showing students what it means to be healthy and why health is the best class ever! A superior teacher is someone who can teach students about the content that they need to know, but also be a role model to them. I want my students to love learning about health and to feel comfortable talking to me about their needs and desires. I want to incorporate my students dreams into my class and help them grow each day. I know that I am not the only teacher in my classes, my students will teach me probably just as much as I teach them and I cannot wait for that. There is always room for improvement and learning when you’re in a classroom. I hope to contribute a positive, relaxed and fun environment in the schools that I teach in in the future. Sometimes students get bogged down by the lectures of other subjects throughout the day, but I hope to be able to loosen them up and have some fun in health and PE.

There are so many fears and concerns that I have about becoming a teacher. I think with anything you’ve never done before comes nerves and suspicions about whether or not you will succeed, but I know I’ll get past any and all of my fears sooner rather than later because some of the ones I had just a year ago are already gone!